

Abstract 294

TITLE: Women's Interest in Vaginal Microbicides

AUTHORS: Jaqueline E. Darroch, Ph.D.; Jennifer J. Frost, Dr. P.H.

OBJECTIVES: Each year, there are an estimated 15 million new cases of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV, in the United States. Women are at a disadvantage, both in terms of greater biological and social susceptibility, and lower degree of control over methods of prevention. This study sought to estimate the numbers of women who would be interested in using a topical microbicide for STD/HIV prevention.

METHODS: A nationally representative sample of 1,000 women aged 18-44 in the continental United States who had had sex with a man in the last 12 months were interviewed by telephone. Analyses identified levels and predictors of interest in vaginal microbicides and worry about STDs and women's preferences regarding method characteristics. Numbers of potential U. S. microbicide users were estimated.

RESULTS: An estimated 21.3 million U. S. women report some potential current interest in using a microbicide product. Depending upon product specifications and cost, as many as six million women who are worried about getting an STD would be "very " interested in current use of a microbicide. These women are most likely to be unmarried and not cohabiting, of low income and less education, and black or Hispanic. They also are more likely to have visited a doctor for STD symptoms or reduced sexual activity because of STDs, to have a partner who had other partners in the past year, to have no steady partner or to have ever used condoms for STD prevention.

CONCLUSION: A significant minority of women in the United State are worried about STDs and think they would use vaginal microbicides. The development, testing and marketing of such products should be expedited.

PRESENTER CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Dina Feivelson, MPH

Address: The Alan Guttmacher Institute, 120 Wall Street.
New York, NY 10005

Telephone: (212) 248-1111

Fax: (212) 248-1951

E-mail: dfeivelson@agi-usa.org